

## Colours of a Sleepless Knight

It was a beautiful summer day somewhere in the suburbia in Southeast Austria. The smell of freshly cut grass was in the air and birds of all kinds were singing their lovely songs. My older brother and I were in our room, drawing. Meanwhile our mother would prepare lunch. I used to draw wholesome things such as animals and landscapes, while my older brother preferred to draw more combative things like planes or cars. That day I drew a smiling sun, and my brother drew a knight on a rearing horse. I liked his drawing and asked him if he would give it to me, but he said no. When he wasn't looking, I took the drawing and carefully tucked it into my backpack. After lunch, my brother and I went to the nearby forest to play hide and seek, a game we would play for hours sometimes, just like on that day. It was my turn to look for him and so I went. My brother was a skilled hider. Time passed by, slowly but gradually the sun started to climb down the remote mountains and the sky was tinted orange and red before it turned dark purple. I wondered where my brother was hiding and was afraid that something bad might have happened to him. The fir trees started laying spooky shadows onto the ground, the air turned grey and chilly. But my brother was still nowhere to be seen. Instead, I found a plant which I had never seen before. Embraced by the moss green leaves, an abundance of hairy and softly fragrant berries in all imaginable colours was hanging down the twigs, some colours were so unique I did not even know their names. I picked a few berries, put them into my backpack and decided to continue the quest of looking for my brother, without success. Eventually, all lights diminished and I found myself buried by complete darkness. Not only did I lose my sight, I also lost track of how to get back home. Thankfully I had a hand torch. I switched it on and opened my backpack. There they are, the colourful berries I picked from before, deliciously glowing and lying next to the stolen knight drawing. Having a little bad conscience, I admired the knight under the dim flashlight. My stomach started to growl, the noise was amplified by its echo in the lonely forest. I decided to eat the berries. The red one looked so inviting, I put it to my mouth. The flesh was juicy and the taste was a mixture of bitter and sweet, while chewing it also reminded me of walnuts. It didn't take long for me to notice that my surroundings started moving. Strange creatures arose from the gloominess and were scanning me from all sides. They looked furry, massive and had glowing red eyes. I was shivering in fear! I held tightly on to the hand torch, trying to beam the monsters away. In my moment of despair, a tree next to me with a friendly face leaned over and encouraged me to try the yellow berry. I frantically swallowed a yellow one without getting much of a taste, but nothing at all seemed to happen. Then I looked up to the sky, only to realise how the moon and the gleaming stars had appeared and they were much bigger than usual. The huge satellites and constellations were enamelled into the inky sky. I calmed down a bit and wanted to admire my brother's drawing again, but it was not in the backpack anymore. It was gone. How could I be so stupid to lose my brother and now his drawing, too. When I was about to get angry with myself, I could hear a loud neighing of a horse from far far away. Then out of nowhere, a giant knight on a giant horse emerged in front of me, whose face I couldn't behold at all. Awestricken and unable to move, I stared into the face of the knight, a total abyss of the void. To my surprise, the knight started to speak to me. After hearing my story, the noble knight brought me back home to my mother's house on a whim. Still bedazzled, I said "thank you" and went into the house, trying not to wake my mother up. Carefully, I opened the door of my bedroom. In his bed, my brother was sleeping, ever so peacefully and the knight drawing was laying just next to his head on the bedside table.